

Blue to Green

In the Nation's Defense

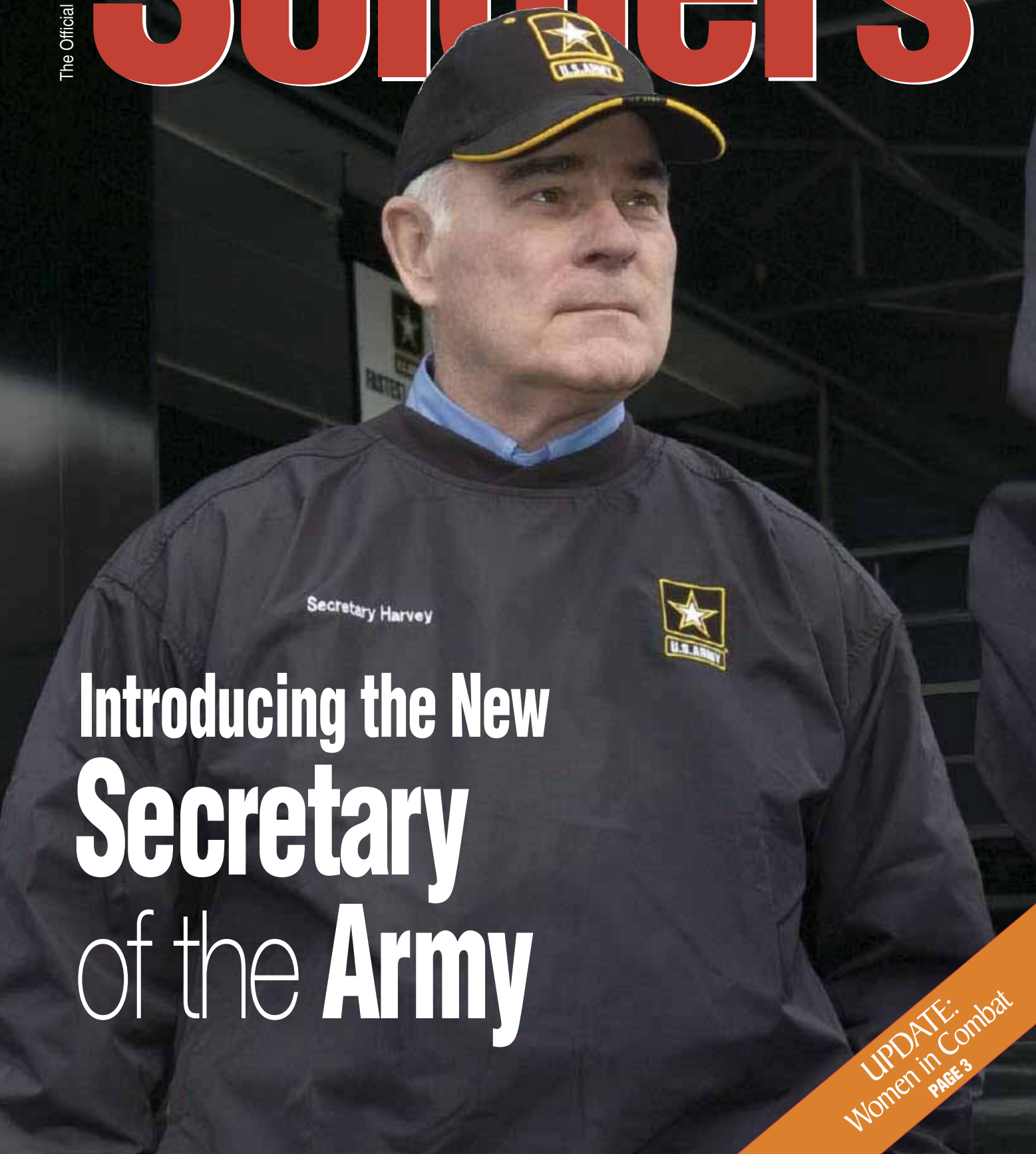
Afghanistan: From War to Hope

The Official U.S. Army Magazine

March 2005

www.soldiersmagazine.com

Soldiers



Introducing the New Secretary of the Army

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Women in Combat
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Dr. Francis J. Harvey is the 19th
secretary of the Army.
— SSG Carmen L. Burgess

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**Do You Know
a Soldiers'
Soldier?**

**Send us your
nominee ...
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IT'S said that good leaders lead from the front, and as you see with our cover story on our new secretary of the Army, he does just that. Only in the job a few months as of this writing, Secretary Francis J. Harvey has been busy visiting Soldiers and their families all over the Army. This month we publish the first interview given by the 19th secretary of the Army when he spoke to Army Newswatch. In it you'll see his goals and vision for the Army.

In an exclusive look at the mission of Joint Task Force-North, Steve Harding tells the story of how Soldiers lend their support to this multi-service agency and its roles in homeland security and the war on drugs.

Because we feel the images of Soldiers doing what they do every day truly tells the story, we offer you a special four-page Sharp Shooters focused on the medics of the 56th Brigade Combat Team of the 36th Infantry Division, photographed by MSG Lek Mateo.

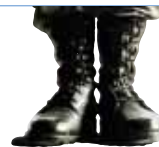
In "Afghanistan: From War to Hope," Beth Reece gives us an update on the progress being made and the work yet to be done in that war-torn country.

For a look at how the Army transitions Airmen, Sailors and Marines into our ranks, don't miss Beth's story on Blue to Green, the Army's new warrior-transition course.

One of the Army's most important missions, the tsunami-relief effort, was just beginning to unfold as the magazine began this publication cycle. Army activities in the affected regions of South and Southeast Asia will be ongoing in the coming months, but for a first look at early relief efforts turn to Heike Hasenauer's article "Responding to the Tsunami Disaster."

As always we welcome your submissions of stories and photos — please help us tell the Army story! Log on to the new Soldiers magazine Web site to find out how!

Gil High
Managing Editor



Soldiers The Official U.S. Army Magazine

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Soldiers (ISSN 0093-8440) is published monthly by the Army Chief of Public Affairs to provide the Total Army with information on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of the Army. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

■ Send submissions and correspondence to Editor, **Soldiers**, 9325 Gunston Road, Suite S108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581. Phone: DSN 656-4486 or commercial 703-806-4486, or send e-mail to soldiers@belvoir.army.mil.

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■ All uncited photographs by U.S. Army.

■ **Military distribution:** From the U.S. Army Distribution Operations Facility, 1655 Woodson Road, St. Louis, MO 63114-6181, in accordance with Initial Distribution Number (IDN) 050007 subscription requirements submitted by commanders.

■ The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Army Regulation 25-30. Library of Congress call number: U1.A827.

■ Periodicals postage paid at Fort Belvoir, VA, and additional mailing offices.

■ **Individual subscriptions:** Subscriptions can be purchased through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

■ **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to the Fort Belvoir address above.

Soldiers

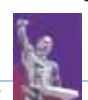
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A MESSAGE FROM THE ARMY LEADERSHIP

In recent weeks, you may have read some of the public discussion about the Army's policy on women in combat. It is important that you know where we stand as the Army's most senior leaders. We reviewed the existing policy and how it applies to current operations and to some of our key transformation initiatives. The policy does not need to change. Women Soldiers will continue to serve with honor and courage in the same Military Occupational Specialties and units as they do now.

Department of Defense policy prevents the assignment of women to units, below the brigade level, whose primary mission is direct ground combat. Army policy further prohibits the assignment of women to positions or units that routinely collocate with those units conducting an assigned direct ground combat mission – such as Cannon Field Artillery or Combat Engineer companies. However, all Soldiers, regardless of gender, are equipped, trained and prepared to defend themselves.

Much of the public discussion on women in combat has been characterized by portrayals of how women have served in the Army in the past, the dangers women face in combat zones such as Iraq and Afghanistan, and their assignment to the new Brigade Combat Team Units of Action. Recent operations in the War on Terrorism consistently show that any Soldier, whether performing combat or support missions, may be exposed to combat hazards. Moreover, within the new Brigade Combat Team Units of Action women are assigned to subordinate companies, such as the Forward Support Companies of the Brigade Support Battalion, and serve in dangerous combat support missions. This is consistent with both DOD and Army policy and is unchanged from past practice.

Women are making tremendous contributions to our efforts to fight and win the War on Terrorism. They make up about 15% of the active Army, 23% of the Army Reserve and 13% of the Army National Guard. Today, almost 17,000 women Soldiers are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Twenty-seven women have made the ultimate sacrifice there. Women have been killed in action, have suffered wounds from hostile action, and have been held captive by our enemies. Though they are not assigned to units that engage enemy forces in direct ground combat – the best examples are Infantry and Armor battalions and companies – women are exposed to combat danger as they perform aviation missions, ground convoy security, unit resupply operations, and a host of other critical functions. And these women, like their male counterparts and the Army's civilians, are serving honorably, selflessly, and courageously.

Women are an invaluable and essential part of the Army team. They play a crucial role in the War on Terrorism and their sacrifices in this noble effort underscore their dedication and willingness to share great responsibilities— hallmarks of the American Soldier. Our Nation has never been served better and we thank you for your service, sacrifice, and dedication to duty.

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

Peter J. Schoomaker
General, U. S. Army
Chief of Staff

Francis J. Harvey
Secretary of the Army

Afghanistan

Soldiers from a battery of the 7th Field Artillery send rounds downrange during an exercise at Forward Operating Base Salerno. The battery is supporting the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, in conducting security and stabilization operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

— Cpl. James L. Yarboro, USMC







◀ Iraq

Army COL Dana Pittard, commander of 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, awaits the signal to escort election workers to a polling station.

— Photo by SGT Matthew Acos

▼ Iraq

The 89th Military Police Bde. guideon stands for the last time at headquarters, Camp Victory, moments before the colors are cased and replaced by those of the 42nd MP Bde.

— Photo by SPC Al Barrus



▲ Afghanistan

SGT Michelle Naylor from Task Force Thunder, Parwan Provincial Reconstruction Team, gives humanitarian and medical aid to children in Gaz-e Sofla village, Surobi district.

— Photo by SPC Johnny R. Aragon





▼ Germany

SSG Anthony R. Purnell, member of a long-range surveillance company assigned to V Corps, demonstrates the correct use of the camouflage ghillie suit during the U.S. Army Europe's Land Combat Expo in Heidelberg, Germany.

— Photo by Melvin G. Tarpley



▲ Bosnia

Soldiers of the 529th MP Co. prepare for a Task Force Eagle disestablishment ceremony at Eagle Base, Tuzla. The ceremony marked the end of major U.S. involvement in Bosnia after nine years and the transfer of the mission to forces of the European Union. Approximately 250 Soldiers will remain in Bosnia as part of a quick-reaction force supporting the EU.

— Photo by Jason L. Ausin

► Afghanistan

Soldiers from the 7th Special Forces Group at Fort Bragg, N.C., and from the Afghan National Army conduct training at the Tarnak Farms Training Area in Kandahar.

— Photo by
SPC Jerry T. Combes



Introducing the New Secretary of the Army



Secretary of the Army
Dr. Francis J. Harvey

“The most important priority is providing for the well-being of Soldiers and their families.”

THE Army's new secretary, **Dr. Francis J. Harvey**, met with Soldiers Radio and Television reporter SSG Michael Lavigne recently to talk about the state of America's Army and its direction for the future. A portion of that interview follows.

Q What are your priorities as secretary of the Army?

Harvey: The most important priority is providing for the well-being of Soldiers and their families. As the chief of staff likes to say, Soldiers are the centerpiece of our Army, so nothing can be more important than a Soldier. I will focus much of my attention on their well-being.

The second priority is providing the land forces to win the global war on terrorism. That means we must recruit and retain Soldiers in a way that we've done historically. For the last five years we've met our retention and recruitment goals. That's a record we should be proud of, but we have to look forward, and we have to have the same performance in the future, so I've been paying a lot of attention to that.

Coupled with that, of course, we have to prepare the deployed forces so they are capable, and that means we will emphasize training and readiness.

The third priority is transforming the Army. That means transforming it in two dimensions: the way we fight and the way we do business. I think under the chief's leadership there's been a lot of progress made in force transformation, with initiatives such as modularity, force stabilization and rebalancing the force.

On the business side I think a lot of work needs to be done. I have a lot of expertise in business transformation from my past corporate career. I'll be putting major emphasis on change and improvements.

A fourth priority is leadership development. We need leaders for today and tomorrow. Our leaders have to be multi-functional. They've got to be good at winning war and peace. So the skills and knowledge required are across the board in that regard.

The fifth priority is execution of our major acquisition programs, such as the Future Combat System and joint tactical radio systems. What I mean there is to meet the cost, schedule and technical objectives



▲ Harvey greets a 25th Infantry Division Soldier before touring new enlisted housing at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

of those programs, which are very important to our near- and long-term future. All major acquisition programs have to be executed successfully for us to be a more capable force in the future.

Providing the resources to execute The Army Plan is another priority of mine, and we will do that by effectively acquiring and managing resources, and in being innovative in the application of those resources. For example, in business transformation, the objective is to reduce the costs of operations. We'll take those savings and apply them to the warfighting side of the house.

Finally, a priority that I like to call "partnerships and relationships" starts with a "no daylight" relationship with the chief and includes a relationship with the secretary of defense and his staff, as well as with Congress, industry and the retired community.

Q What challenges do you see facing the Army that may affect those priorities?

Harvey: I think the major challenge the Army has involves two dimensions. It is first and foremost to win the global war on terrorism and, second, to transform the Army in ways that will make us a more capable organization in the future, both from a warfighting perspective and a business perspective. Again, keeping in mind the efficiency and effectiveness that we can gain in business, we can apply additional resources to the warfighting side of the house.

— "Providing the resources to execute The Army Plan is another priority of mine." —

Q Can you discuss your plan to take care of Soldiers and their families?

Harvey: We have two major quality-of-life initiatives. One is the Residential-Communities Initiative, and the other is the barracks-modernization program. During my first trip to the field — to Alaska, Korea and Hawaii — I saw the result of those initiatives first-hand. I think those are excellent programs. I will certainly support them fully and try to keep them on schedule.

I know that the RCI program is off to a good start. It involves 45 installations and about 85,000 houses, where new houses are being built, remodeling is going on, and contracts have either been awarded or are being solicited. I very much support the initiative and will try to accelerate it as much as we can.

The barracks-modernization program affects about 136,000 Soldiers. I can say from past experience that these barracks



▲ A stop at Tripler Army Medical Center to visit Soldiers wounded during Operation Iraqi Freedom was another important part of Harvey's tour of units in Hawaii.

are nicer than college dorms, and Soldiers deserve them.

In 2004 the Army spent about \$700 million on barracks modernization; over the 2005 to 2009 time frame, another \$4 billion will be spent on barracks modernization. So I'll fully support these efforts because, as the saying goes, "Soldiers enlist and families re-enlist." They should live just like the rest of America lives, because Soldiers are defending our country.

"Soldiers should live just like the rest of America lives, because Soldiers are defending our country."

Q Can you tell us about yourself? Where have you been? What's your Defense Department background?

Harvey: I have experience that's very relevant to this job. I've been involved for about 30 years with corporations that do business with the federal government, in particular with the DOD.

I've been involved in various phases of about 20 major acquisition programs, from undersea to outer space programs.

I also served as a White House Fellow in the late 1970s under Secretary of Defense Harold Brown. I was an assistant to the secretary, so I got a high-level perspective of how the DOD is run. Those processes have not changed. They've just improved significantly over the last 25 years.

From 1998 to 2001 I served on the Army Science Board. That provided an opportunity to visit many Army installations, including the National Training Center. Also, I was involved in the initial studies that led up to what's today called

the Future Combat Systems Program. I was involved in studies to define platforms that are lethal, survivable and mobile. Now we're going to have to convert what were then concepts into reality, which is a technical challenge, but I'm confident industry can come through for us.

Q How does it feel having been so heavily involved in the development of new military equipment, to being more heavily involved in the Soldier's quality of life?

Harvey: I have a management philosophy that emphasizes that people are the single most important part of any organization. Even though I know how to lead, manage and change large organizations — particularly ones involved in major programs that are developing and deploying systems and technology — underneath all of that are people. And people are what make it happen.



▲ With Soldiers of the 3rd U.S. Inf. (The Old Guard) in the background, Harvey addresses members of the Fort Myer, Va., military community.



Q You talked about your involvement in the precursor to the Future Combat System. That rolls into Army transformation a great deal. What are your thoughts on how Army transformation is progressing so far?

Harvey: I think great progress has been made. Let's take a look at modularity, which the chief stated will result in a much more capable force. We're going to have a 30-percent increase in combat power of the active component. We're going to go from 33 brigades to 43 brigades.

If you look at the rotational pool that we're going to develop in units in the active and reserve components, we're going to go from 48 to 77 brigades, which is a 60-percent increase. Then you look at the composition of the combined force, there's 50 percent more infantry. Then with all the additional units, you have a predictable rotational cycle.

For the active force that means one year deployed out of three, and for the Reserve, one year deployed out of five,

and for the Guard, one out of six. It's predictable, it's stable and that creates a lot of advantages for Soldiers and their families. We can predict when you're going to go. You can be at a base for an extended period of time, so children can be in school and your spouse has that predictability and stability of being in one place when you're gone.

A couple of other advantages of modularity are that we will have a headquarters that can be deployed in a joint fashion. It's a headquarters that doesn't have to be tailored and is organized the way it's going to fight. So we don't have to go ad hoc and put things together.

We're well down the road on units of action. All the conceptual thought has been given to that. There's been a lot of model simulation to gauge combat effectiveness.

Maneuver units of action are in place, and support units of action are being developed.

In terms of business transformation, I think we're just beginning that effort. We've got to ask the tough questions, like:

"If you have some type of repair operation, what is world-class performance for your operation? Where are you now, relative to that world-class performance? What's your plan to get you to world-class performance?"

This effort is important because it's going to free up resources that we can apply to the warfighting side.

Q When you say the "warfighting side," do you mean the war on terror? Do you mean quality of life? Does it all wind itself together?

Harvey: It does wind itself together, but when I say that, for example, we need to have resources for modularity, if we can get the resources from the business side we can accelerate modularity. Certainly we can have a detailed plan. But this just helps us do it more quickly and develop a more capable force.



▲ Within days of his appointment, Harvey was on the road, greeting and talking with Soldiers.

Q You just mentioned business transformation as it applies to rebalancing the force and restructuring the Army. How is that going to affect the individual Soldier? What's that going to mean to that Soldier and his family?

Harvey: As you know, securing financial resources is always a challenge. I consider it to be one of my primary responsibilities. Our needs have to be balanced across the DOD. There are other needs that are certainly valid.

If, in fact, we can drive down the cost of our business operations, that gives me more flexibility, and if there are shortfalls in the future, I can have that flexibility for quality of life. That's why business transformation is so important. It's all interconnected.

Q You made your first visit to troops overseas, to the Pacific area. What did you think of the area?

Harvey: My objective was to see the Army from the Soldier's perspective. You can sit in the Pentagon, you can talk to officers, but I wanted to get out there with the Soldiers and talk to them and see what they thought. I wanted to know first-hand if quality-of-life initiatives are really having the desired effect. I wanted to see a new barracks, talk about RCI and listen to what the problems and challenges are.

We've got a lot of high-quality, competent Soldiers with wonderful, positive attitudes who really do understand the importance of winning the war on terrorism. They know what it's all about. They know we're fighting an enemy that's trying to disrupt the way the world works. They know that if the enemy succeeds, the economic well-being of tens of millions of people across the world, not only in the United States, will be jeopardized. They understand the importance of the mission. I was really impressed with the quality of our Soldiers.

Q Is there anything you'd like to say to Soldiers and their families to let them know who you are and what you're all about?

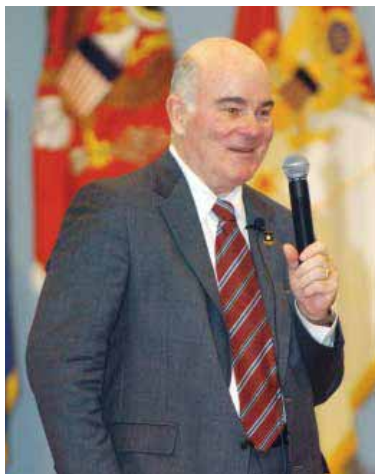
Harvey: Let me just say that when our Soldiers are out there in the cold and the dark fighting terrorism, they can rest assured that I will be fighting for them, getting the resources that are needed to improve the quality of life for them and their families, and ensuring that they have the right equipment and training. 🇺🇸

"I will be fighting for them, getting the resources that are needed to improve the quality of life for them and their families, and ensuring that they have the right equipment and training."

“Soldiers know that we’re fighting an enemy that’s trying to disrupt the way the world works. They know that if the enemy succeeds, the economic well-being of tens of millions of people across the world, not only in the United States, will be jeopardized.”



▲ Harvey talks with Chief of Staff GEN Peter Schoomaker during a visit to the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas.



“People are the single most important part of any organization, especially the Army.”

FRANCIS J. Harvey was born and raised in Latrobe, Pa. He lettered in football at Latrobe High School, and was named All-Western Pennsylvania Scholar Athlete of the Year for Westmoreland County in 1960. In 1961, he was named All-State Offensive Lineman.

Harvey earned a bachelor of science degree in metallurgical engineering and material science from the University of Notre Dame, and a doctorate in metallurgy and material sciences from the University of Pennsylvania.

He is married and has two sons and five grandchildren.

Some of Harvey’s “favorites” include:

- Historical figures — Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin;
- Books — “Cold Mountain” by Charles Frazier and “The Killer Angels” by Michael Shaara;
- Sports teams — Pittsburgh Steelers, Notre Dame and Penn State football, and San Jose Sharks;
- Activities — golfing, skiing and astronomy; and
- Movies — Star Trek Next Generation’s “Generations,” “First Contact” and “Insurrection.”

The secretary’s leadership philosophy is:

- People are the single most important part of any organization, especially the Army;
- Ultimately, the only thing that counts is the result — what gets measured gets done;
- Continuous change and improvement of all aspects of the organization are essential;
- Trust and teamwork are fundamental to success;
- Effective leaders establish clear directions and destinations for their organizations and then align, motivate and inspire their people to get there; and
- There is no substitute for a positive, can-do attitude.

— Office of the Secretary of the Army

Afghanistan: From War to Hope

Story by Beth Reece



SFC Darren D. Heusel

SFC Sandra WatkinsKeough



▲ 1LT Jaen Nunez examines an Afghan man during a combined medical-assistance mission in the Mullahi Suri District of Afghanistan.

(Top) A worker with the Joint Electoral Management Body in Afghanistan checks election ballots at a counting center in central Kabul.

DURING the bid for democracy, trouble lingers in Afghanistan.

When coalition military forces swarmed into the war-ravaged nation in October 2001, the Taliban tyrannized much of the land. But the start of Operation Enduring Freedom quickly changed that, as terrorist training camps were destroyed, weapons caches were captured and warlords hid like cowards. Within three months of the first coalition air strikes, an interim government was inaugurated and humanitarian aid began.

Despite the changes Soldiers have brought to Afghanistan, much work remains. The international coalition continues to confront Taliban loyalists and their al-Qaeda allies. Insurgents still attack military convoys and base camps, threatening villagers who support social and political unity.

Soldiers continue to fight even as they undertake humanitarian missions, said Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan commander LTG David W. Barno during a Department of Defense news briefing last fall.

"It's a multifaceted effort, not simply hunting terrorists in the hills. I've got lieutenants having tea with village elders and doing village assessments; and then that afternoon and

SGT Michael Abney





Soldiers of Task Force Pirate depart Jegdalek following a humanitarian mission to the village.



evening they're getting ready for a night operation to take down a compound where intelligence indicates a terrorist is making improvised explosive devices," Barno said.

By October 2004 about 18,000 U.S. and coalition troops were still serving in Afghanistan. More than 100 U.S. Soldiers have been killed since the operation began, according to the latest DOD casualty figures.

An Army is Born

The coalition has made way for a secure Afghanistan by recruiting and training volunteers for the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.

ANA recruits start their military service at the Kabul Military Training Center, where National Guard units from more than 20 states assist in areas ranging from leadership to combat operations. The center offers NCO and officer training. Though staffed by ANA drill instructors, Soldiers provide mentorship.

The ANA's first operational unit began

SFC Darren D. Heusel



conducting limited security patrols in early 2003. By last fall, ANA soldiers — numbering about 15,000 — were taking on security roles throughout the country.

In an Army News Service report, ANA Senior Capt. Hazar Meir spoke of

▲ SSG Damian George of the 58th Military Police Co. from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, explains the proper techniques for holding a line to members of the Afghan National Police during riot-control training.

◀ Female Afghan National Police officers learn the finer points of how to use non-lethal force to quell civil disturbances during riot training conducted by U.S. forces. The women say they are glad to be doing their part to help Afghanistan on the road to democracy.

quelling villagers' fear of the military by telling them: "I am your brother," and that the ANA will help foster a "united Afghanistan." He and fellow ANA troops occasionally pass out leaflets explaining their mission to replace oppression with peace.

The growth and permanence of the ANA seemed evident last October with the designation of the Kandahar Regional Command, one of what will eventually



▲ SPC Gerardo Huerta (left) and SPC Octavio Mchado of the 82nd Airborne Div. perform maintenance on a .50-caliber machine gun shortly after arriving in Afghanistan as part of a surge force supporting the presidential elections last October.



▲ SSG Damiam George of the 58th Military Police Co. stationed at Bagram Air Base demonstrates to the Afghan National Police the proper way to handcuff a suspect as part of a training exercise in the use of such modern police tactics as riot control, convoy security and dignitary protection.

be four regional commands overseeing a total of 70,000 ANA soldiers.

"After 25 years of war, we have been able to set up our military units and corps to safeguard the identity of our nation, and to defend our people," said Kandahar Governor Yousef Pashtoon during the activation ceremony. "We came to this successful day through the best plans of our government and with the ample assistance of the coalition, and especially the

U.S. Army."

Units like the 58th Military Police Company have also helped train more than 25,000 ANP officers in modern police tactics and riot control. And last year U.S. Soldiers helped the ANP create its own Rapid Action Division — similar to a quick-reaction force — to boost security during the presidential election.

"I've been very impressed with the enthusiasm and professionalism of our



▲ A young Afghan boy removes shells from a bunker located near the Herat airport. The site was established as part of the U.S.-led coalition's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program, which is aimed at persuading warlords and other militia members to lay down their weapons and join Afghanistan's fledgling democracy.

Afghan police counterparts," said COL Jon Lopey, chief of the Civil Military Operations Law-Enforcement Cell, CFC-A. "Police development is so important throughout the nation, and what we do now is going to help shape the police force for years to come."

Power in the People's Hands

More than 8 million villagers reportedly cast votes last fall in the country's first presidential election in more than 40 years. Beyond being a step toward democracy, the elections were also a sign of growing equal rights for women. Of the 10 million Afghans registered to vote, 40 percent were female, according to statistics posted on DOD's Web site.

That the election occurred without interruption was a relief to organizers concerned about insurgents' threats to attack Afghans heading for the polls, said MG Eric T. Olson, commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76.



“Because of the tremendous courage of United Nations officials and the willingness to cooperate with Afghan security forces and the coalition, we overcame that challenge,” he said.

U.S. and coalition troops conducted presence patrols to help villagers feel safe heading out to vote. More than 1,000 Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division were deployed solely to hike security, according to the U.S. Central Command. ANA troops also ran security patrols.

As security relaxed after the election, insurgents resurfaced. A truck carrying supplies to Soldiers was destroyed by a remote-controlled bomb in mid-October. Also that month, two Soldiers were killed and three wounded in a land-mine blast. Other attacks were also reported.

A Nation in Repair

After years of neglect and damage, Afghanistan is finally mending. Bridges, roads, hospitals, schools, water wells and more have been rebuilt or constructed anew.

Construction projects are identified and coordinated by one of more than 15 Provin-

▲ LTC Robin Minonas conducts a village assessment and negotiates the needs with the village elders and educational leaders. The goal is to provide some 1,200 children using tent schools some security before winter arrives.

cial Reconstruction Teams scattered across the country, according to Pentagon officials. PRT members determine villages’ needs by collaborating with provincial governors, local officials, government ministers, the United Nations, and international agencies.

Progress in Afghanistan has been persistent, Barno said in a recent interview with the Pentagon News Channel. The nation’s economy is growing at the rate of 20 percent a year, he reported, and more than 5 mil-

lion children were in school by the end of 2004, compared to just 1 million in 2003.

The Army Corps of Engineers’ Afghanistan Engineer District has offered its expertise in the development of facilities, roads, and power and water resources.

Its largest role has been in the design and building of ANA installations, which are

SSG Philiz Witzke



► Marine Maj. Jon Neuman teaches Afghan children at the Sia Sang Kaita Now refugee camp how to avoid common diseases by washing their hands and faces.



◀ CPT Cristal Horsch from Task Force 325 in Bagram examines an Afghan woman during a combined medical-assistance mission in the Mullayai Suri District.

modeled after U.S. installations. The Corps has overseen the construction of almost 200 barracks, as well as dining facilities, administration buildings and gymnasiums, said COL John O'Dowd, commander of the COE's Afghanistan district.

"We didn't do this alone. With the help of the ANA providing security for us while we oversaw construction, we have overcome several challenges in a landlocked war zone, such as limited local supplies and operating (in an area located) more than 1,000 kilometers from the nearest post," O'Dowd said.

Health care is also improving. Medical-assistance teams travel the country regularly to provide villagers with dental care, and help treat skin problems and dietary deficiencies. Afghans are also receiving continuing education about sanitary habits, and the availability of medical supplies has greatly increased.

The newest danger to surface is the trafficking of illegal drugs. It's a problem that could harm progress already made in the country, and one that Soldiers will eventually play a role in correcting, said Barno in a DOD news briefing last fall.

Still Searching

Last fall, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told the Council on Foreign Relations that more than two-thirds of al Qaeda's key members and associates have

been detained, captured or killed.

Yet despite rumors of Osama bin Laden's death, a videotape featuring his image and voice aired on al-Jazeera television last October. The hunt for bin Laden and his senior leaders has not slowed or

ceased, Barno said.

"We have a very focused effort to find them and bring them to justice. We owe that to the nearly 3,000 victims of the 9/11 attacks," he said.

The last intelligence indicating bin Laden's location surfaced in 2001, but Soldiers continue searching along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Even with bin Laden in the hands of the United States, the CJTF-76 commander affirms that Soldiers' work in securing democracy and freedom for Afghans will continue.

"I think we've only just begun, in terms of a permanent and lasting secure environment in Afghanistan," Olson said. 🇺🇸



▶ Three workers with the Joint Electoral Management Body in Afghanistan check ballots at a counting center in central Kabul.

Blue to Green

Story by Beth Reece

Army's New Warrior Transition Course

SPC Beverly Sage jumped ship to answer the Army's call. Today she wears combat boots instead of Navy blues, and can fire an M-16 like her life depends on it. "The Army is on the frontlines of the war. If joining means I have to serve in Iraq, I'm ready," said the ex-sailor.

Sage's confidence is a product of the Army's new Warrior Transition Course at Fort Knox, Ky. The course is designed to make Soldiers of former Airmen, Sailors and Marines. It's also an incentive for second-time volunteers wanting to rejoin the Army's ranks without repeating nine weeks of basic training.

"We train these Soldiers with the expectation that every

single one of them will see combat. The accepted generalization is that about 50 percent of them will be in combat within six months. Over a three-year period, they all will be," said MAJ Ralph Hudnall, executive officer for 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry Regiment, which trains WTC students.

- SGT Jeffrey Coleman attacks a dummy after maneuvering through part of an obstacle course that is part of Warrior Transition Course participants' transition or reintroduction to the Army.
- ▼ A drill sergeant briefs WTC participants before they start a field exercise.



Staff Sgt. Derrick Goode, USAF

"We train these Soldiers with the expectation that every single one of them will see combat. The accepted generalization is that about 50 percent of them will be in combat within six months. . ."





Beth Reece (both)

▲ SPC Gabriel Davies, a former Sailor, uses a map (*above*) and a protractor (*right*) during land-navigation training.



The Army Way

Trainees spend the first week at WTC learning the Army's rank structure and military courtesies, and brush up on such core tasks as teamwork development, first aid, drill and ceremony, and land navigation. The goal is to introduce those coming from other services to the Army's way of working, and to refresh the skills of former Soldiers.

Week two is spent at the firing range, where trainees engage targets with a variety of weapons in day- and night-firing exercises.

By midcourse, trainees feel the strain of having to pass a physical-fitness test with just three weeks to prepare.

"The hardest thing is the physical part," said SGT Jeffrey Coleman. "I exercised at home, but it was nothing like this.

"A lot of folks are choosing the Army out of patriotic duty, feeling that if they're on the ground they'll have greater impacts on the war."

This reminds me that I'm not 18 anymore."

Coleman, 36, served five years in the field artillery before entering the civilian workforce.

"I got out because my wife wasn't comfortable with the deployments, but I always felt I was out of my element after that," said the Desert Storm veteran. "This is where I'm meant to be — in the Army."

Reality

Tactical training is the longest and final part of WTC. This segment is a reality-check for trainees who expect they'll never cross enemy lines.

"We're training students on the specific tasks they'll need to survive in Iraq," Hudnall said.

Skills taught to make Soldiers combat-ready include convoy and checkpoint operations, urban warfare, live-fire operations and recognition of improvised explosive devices.

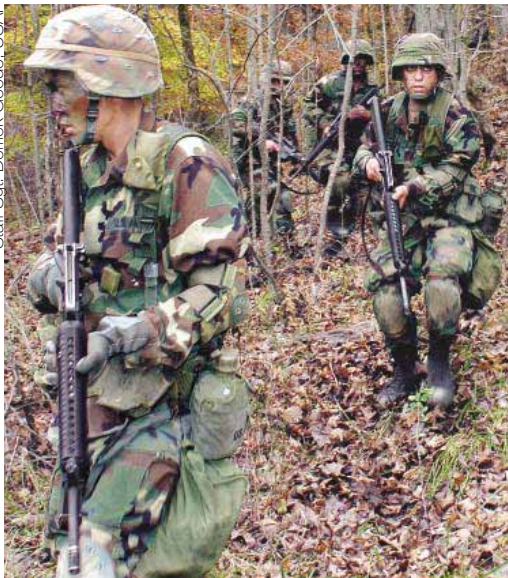
Training sites mirror the operating bases Soldiers currently see in Afghanistan and Iraq, complete with convoy routes, checkpoints, media representatives and milling locals. Wrecked vehicles, telephone poles and guardrails also cover the convoy route, and scenarios are peppered with enemy ambushes and IEDs.

The final exercise takes squads through a four-hour convoy mis-



Beth Reece

▼ WTC trainees spend a week on marksmanship training, firing their M-16s during both day and night live-fire exercises.



▲ Former Sailors and Airmen take to the field during WTC training.



▲ SGT Kenneth Kinlaw jumps one of the many hurdles Soldiers encounter during training on the obstacle course.

sion. They receive indirect fire during movement through an urban area, fight back, get hit by an IED, and clear and secure a building — all while treating and evacuating casualties.

“The capstone exercise is a very detailed event that pushes them to their limit — it’s a taste of reality, especially for Soldiers who will go to support units, which are just as likely to be in a firefight as any other unit,” Hudnall said. “There is no rear area on today’s battlefield, no safe zone.”

Students serve in leadership positions twice during the course. As in professional-development classes, trainees are expected to put their experience and maturity to work.

“Some of these students were NCOs when they left their prior services, or they were NCOs before taking a break from the Army,” Hudnall said. “We take advantage of that, and let drill sergeants be teachers, coaches and mentors instead of stern, authoritarian figures.”



Blue to Green

The WTC was initiated so the Army could profit from the experience and training of individuals leaving the other services due to force reductions. Personnel officials estimate cutbacks will push 16,000 airmen and 8,000 sailors off the rolls in fiscal year 2005.

“We’re getting top-quality folks who are committed to continuing their service in the military,” Hudnall said. “A lot of folks are choosing the Army out of patriotic duty, feeling that if they’re on the ground they’ll have greater impacts on the war.”

SPC Keonta Lewis craved change after five years in Navy logistics, but still felt driven to serve his country.

“The rank structure and way of doing things is very different from what I was used to in the Navy,” Lewis said. “I know in my heart that I made the right decision to join the Army. And also, this is the best way for me to financially support my family.”

Sage said her interest in the Army was piqued by the programs and training it offers. Promises of quicker promotions sealed the deal.

“It took me six years to become a petty officer third class in the Navy. I followed my dad and my brother into the Navy, but if I’d joined the Army to start with, I’d probably be an officer by now,” she said.

When asked if she’s still a Sailor at heart, Sage said “I’m a Soldier now.” 🚩

The WTC will relocate to Fort Bliss, Texas, in May 2005.

◀ Trainees take a quick lunch break before returning to the rifle range for marksmanship training.



Medical supplies are prepared for loading aboard the hospital ship USNS *Merc* , docked at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, before sailing to Southeast Asia. Collection of the donated materials was coordinated by the Hawaii National Guard.

— Photo by PH Dennis Cantrell, USN

Responding to the Tsunami Disaster

Story by Heike Hasenauer

U.S. military forces were providing relief to the devastated regions of South and Southeast Asia within days after a massive earthquake triggered tsunamis that killed more than 220,000 people in the region.

Twelve countries felt the effects of the tsunamis, former Secretary of State

Colin Powell said as he addressed leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations during a meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia.

"The devastation truly is unprecedented," Powell said.

Besides the staggering death toll, which continued to climb at press time, thousands of people were still unaccounted for weeks after the disaster and thousands more were left homeless and subject to the risk of disease and starvation, aid organizations reported.

The U.S. government pledged

some \$350 million for humanitarian aid and recovery assistance to the governments of the affected countries, Powell said. Additionally, some 14,450 U.S. military personnel were involved in the massive humanitarian-aid mission dubbed Operation Unified Assistance.

From Jan. 4, when the operation began, to Jan. 11, the services had employed a reported 26 ships and 96 aircraft to deliver nearly 1.6 million pounds of relief supplies to the region. Over one 24-hour period alone they had delivered nearly 20,000 gallons





PHAN Jordan Beesley, USN



▲ An Indonesian boy stands in front of his house, which was destroyed by the tsunami.

of water, 143,000 pounds of food and about 100,000 pounds of non-medical supplies, Department of Defense reports indicated.

An Immediate Response

“Army forces in the Pacific have been fully involved in the planning and assessment process for tsunami humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief efforts,” said LTG John M. Brown III, commander of U.S. Army, Pacific, the organization that is coordinating the U.S. military aid.

“To date, we have responded with every asset requested by the joint task force commander and U.S. Pacific Command, and we will continue to support this major combined operation until USARPAC support is no longer needed,” he said.

Soldiers from the Okinawa-based 58th Signal Battalion provided round-the-clock communications support for the Combined Support Forces, through its operation of the Standardized Tacti-

▲ Thousands of people were missing and many more were left homeless even weeks after the tsunami struck Indonesia.

— Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Allmon, USAF

cal Entry Point for satellite communications, said USARPAC spokeswoman Mary Markovinic.

U.S. forces deployed to the disaster area can access DOD’s global information system via the STEP site, said COL Brian Donahue, commander of the 516th Sig. Brigade.

Alaska and Hawaii — the two states closest to the disaster area — sent Air National Guard personnel and resources to the region to conduct airlift operations, said MSG Bob Haskell of the National Guard Bureau.

Corps of Engineers Support

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sent three forward-engineering support teams, each composed of four civilian engineers from USACE offices in



Japan, Alaska or Arkansas, and two Soldiers from the 249th Engineer Bn. from Fort Lewis, Wash., or Fort Shafter, Hawaii, said USACE spokesman Dennis Bohannon.

Starting in Thailand, they're assessing damages to roads, bridges, railways and other structures and helping to complete reconstruction plans, he said.

Port Operations

Soldiers and civilians from the Hawaii-based 599th Transportation Group, part of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, joined forces with personnel from subordinate transportation battalions in Okinawa and Yokohama, Japan, and Pusan, Korea, to form the 599th Deployment and Distribution Support Team.

Designated as PACOM's single port manager for tsunami-relief operations, the 599th DDST managed operations at the port of Laem Chabang,



Lance C21, Hugh S. Holder III, USMC



Thailand, where six prepositioned ships delivered supplies in January.

The materiel was enough to support the efforts of 15,000 Marines for 30 days and included medical supplies, construction equipment and a Navy field hospital, according to USARPAC reports.

The team also helped offload the leased high-speed transport vessel Westpac Express, providing Marines arriving at Chuk Samet, Thailand, with Humvees, cargo trucks and forklifts,

▲ (Top) The relief effort in Thailand became a joint-service and multi-national operation.

▲ Members of the Army Corps of Engineers coordinate relief efforts during a video teleconference originating from Hawaii.

according to a 599th Trans. Grp. report by Robyn Mack.

Aid From Korea

Eighth U.S. Army, Korea, dispatched a C-12U aircraft from



PH1 John Yoder, USN

Company A, 6th Bn., 52nd Aviation Regiment, to support the Coalition Support Group operating in Indonesia, said command spokesman LTC Thomas Budzyna.

The C-12U is a high-performance turboprop that can quickly ferry supplies and personnel to needed areas, officials said.

Soldiers from the Yongsan-based 18th Medical Command provided supplies to Navy and Marine Corps units in Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

◀ A single house is all that remains in a once beautiful community in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

▼ Staff Sgt. Randy Harrell and fellow Marines from the 9th Engineer Support Battalion from Okinawa, Japan, work near a damaged school in Galle, Sri Lanka.

MSG David Kohlmann



➤ Crew members load materiel belonging to the Army's Co. B, 96th Civil Affairs Bn., aboard a C-130 from Marine squadron VMGR-152 for the flight to Sri Lanka.

MSG David Kohlmann



Other Eighth Army units were on alert to support OUA at the time this article was written.

"The desire demonstrated by Soldiers in Korea to help people in the tsunami-stricken areas, and their teamwork to prepare for deployment to Operation Unified Assistance is inspiring," said Budzyna.

Other Units Alerted, Deployed

In the United States, four mortuary-affairs teams from Fort Lee, Va., were alerted to deploy to help with the identification, processing and transportation of remains, said MAJ Nate Flegler, a U.S. Forces Command spokesman.

Three civil-affairs teams and one psychological operations assessment team from the U.S. Army Special Operations Command's 96th Civil Affairs Bn. at Fort Bragg, N.C., and the 4th PSYOPS Group, respectively, deployed to Camp Smith, Hawaii, during the first two weeks in January to help USARPAC officials determine how best to use U.S. military resources, said USASOC spokesman Ben Abel.

While the CA teams helped plan

and coordinate relief efforts, PSYOPS Soldiers stood ready to provide valuable information to victims of the tsunami, via their broadcast and print capabilities, if needed, Abel said.

In a briefing to the Pentagon press corps in early January, PACOM commander Admiral Thomas B. Fargo outlined the joint services' relief efforts.

Fargo said PACOM began planning its relief response within 24 hours after the catastrophe occurred. Its officials contacted ambassadors and senior military leaders in affected countries.

PACOM formed Joint Task Force 536, which has since been redesignated as the Combined Support Force, to help coordinate the military's relief efforts. CSF is located at an air base at Utapao, Thailand.

Among DOD's other immediate actions were:

- Ordering damage-assessment teams to affected areas within 48 hours of the disaster, to gauge the type and amount of relief needed;
- Enlisting support from the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group, which was in the theater near Banda Aceh and included support vessels and 15 helicopters;
- Deploying the USS *Bonhomme Richard* Expeditionary Strike Group from Guam, with support vessels and 25 helicopters; and
- Sending a Navy environmental and preventive-medicine unit from Pearl Harbor to Indonesia to monitor water quality and check for the presence of diseases.

"On behalf of President Bush and the American people I wish to extend our deepest condolences to all of the nations that have suffered such a heartbreaking loss of life," Powell told national leaders in Jakarta. "The president wants you to know that the affected nations will have the full support of the United States as they rebuild their societies, families, industry, homes and schools." 🇺🇸

➤ Secretary of State Colin Powell confers with Army and civilian representatives after touring some of the hardest-hit areas.

Lance C21. Hugh Holder, USMC



In the Nation's Defense

Story by Steve Harding

Photos courtesy Joint Task Force-North

IN September 2004 a brief ceremony at Fort Bliss, Texas, marked a major change in the mission of a little-known but vitally important U.S. military organization.

Established in 1989 as Joint Task Force-6, the multi-service agency was originally tasked with planning and coordinating the Department of Defense's support for the counterdrug activities of local, state and federal law-enforcement agencies. But with the advent of the war on terror and the expanding threat of terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, JTF-6 has been redesignated as Joint Task Force-North and given a pivotal role in defending the homeland.

It was an obvious and logical expansion of the organization's mission, said JTF-N commander BG Jose D. Riojas.

"There is a definite link between illegal drugs and terrorism," he said. "Many terrorists gain their funding through producing and selling illegal drugs. So it was a natural evolution that, based on our extensive





Service members load a Marine Corps AH-1W Cobra helicopter aboard an Air Force C-5 transport. JTF-N arranges for, and funds, such transportation for the equipment of participating units.



experience in counterdrug operations and working with law-enforcement agencies every day, we would move into homeland defense. Many of the lessons and techniques we've learned over the years are directly applicable to that vital mission."

A History of Success

Those lessons and techniques were learned in the shadow war the United States has been waging for nearly two decades against illegal drugs and those who produce and distribute them.

That war has been particularly hard-fought in the Southwestern states, where South and Central American cartels use every means at their disposal to smuggle marijuana, cocaine and other illicit drugs from Mexico into the United States. Law-enforcement agencies short on manpower and the advanced technologies necessary to stem the flow of drugs were more than happy to make use of the assets the military could provide, Riojas said, and JTF-6 quickly became an indispensable part of the counterdrug effort.

By pairing law-enforcement

agencies in need of assistance with active-duty and Reserve military units that could provide the needed assets — engineer units that could improve border roads or aviation units that could provide helicopter support, for example — JTF-6 vastly improved

▲ Military assistance provided through JTF-N has allowed civilian law-enforcement agencies to enhance drug-interdiction programs along the nation's borders.

"So, in addition to helping law-enforcement agencies cover the nation's 7,500 miles of land borders, 95,000 miles of coastline and navigable waterways, and more than 20,000 small airports, we began working in the nation's interior to help combat the domestic production of marijuana, methamphetamines and other illegal drugs," said Armando Carrasco, JTF-N's public affairs officer.

"It's a huge task," he said. "After the September 2001 terrorist attacks we saw a tremendous increase in the cultivation of marijuana and

the production of methamphetamines on public lands and within national forests throughout the United States, primarily because the traffickers decided that it was easier to produce the product here than try to get across tighter borders." [See accompanying story.]

By helping law-enforcement agencies obtain needed assistance from the



▲ Unmanned aerial vehicles operated by military units have provided a tremendous increase in the real-time intelligence available to law-enforcement agencies.

law enforcement's ability to detect and intercept drug shipments, Riojas said.

Indeed, JTF-6 was so successful in providing military support to the U.S Customs Service and other agencies working in the border region, he said, that in 1995 JTF-6's area of responsibility for counterdrug support operations was expanded to cover all 48 contiguous states.



Steve Harding

◀ JTF-N's command center at Fort Bliss allows participating organizations to share information and coordinate their activities in real time, thus allowing a faster and more comprehensive response to developing situations.

military, the contributions made to the success of the national war on drugs made by the earlier JTF-6 and current JTF-N are significant.

"And the expertise this organization has long demonstrated in the counterdrug effort will serve the nation well in our new homeland-security support mission," Riojas said.

The New Mission

That new mission is a broad one, Carrasco said.

"We're tasked to detect, monitor and support the interdiction of suspected transnational threats — such as drug trafficking, terrorist organizations, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the delivery systems for such weapons that threaten the nation's security — within and along the approaches to the continental United States," Carrasco said.

"JTF-N is part of U.S. Northern Command, and NORTHCOM's area of responsibility covers all of North America, including both Canada and Mexico," he said. "JTF-N will be working with our partner nations to deal with such issues as early detection and monitoring of threats on the other side of the borders."

JTF-N will fuse and disseminate intelligence information and contribute to the common operating picture,

coordinate support to the lead federal agencies, and support security cooperation initiatives in order to secure the homeland and enhance regional security, he added.

"We are in the development stage of our homeland-defense mission," Riojas said. "But I'm certain that the tactics, techniques and procedures we developed to help fight the war on drugs will serve us well in this new task. We are organized for success."

The Right Mix

One of the secrets of JTF-N's success, Carrasco said, is that it is "a truly joint organization."

Commanded by an Army brigadier general, the agency has active and Reserve members from each of the military services, as well as representatives from several federal agencies.

"We are a managing and coordinating headquarters, with a total workforce of approximately 200 people," Carrasco said. "We don't have any assigned assets, in terms of operational units. Our missions are executed by volunteer units, and we actively solicit the participation of active and Reserve units from all the services."

Under the terms of the 1878 Posse Comitatus Act and other federal laws, the nation's active and Reserve military forces are allowed to provide logistical, technical and transportation assistance to law enforcement, but are prohibited from directly participating in searches, seizures or arrests, he said.

"All federal law-enforcement agencies submit their requests for JTF-N support to the Operation Alliance office, which is co-located with us here," Riojas said. "Operation Alliance is a consortium of federal law-enforcement agencies, and its representatives



► The cooperation among military and civilian agencies in JTF-N-supported operations is close, while at the same time adhering to all applicable federal regulations.



determine the priorities for our support. Everything we do is in response to requests from federal law-enforcement agencies; JTF-N does not initiate any support missions.”

And while JTF-N can receive intelligence information from various agencies and pass that information on to other users, Carrasco said it cannot gather intelligence information on American citizens or organizations.

“We also have to comply with all local, state and federal laws, and we ensure that all the military personnel who execute our missions are aware of all the applicable laws,” he said.

Good Training

Learning the laws governing military support to civilian law-enforcement agencies is important for participating units, Carrasco said. And while helping the nation’s law-enforcement agencies secure the homeland, the units undertake some of the

best training they’ll ever get.

“Our missions last from two weeks to 179 days,” he said. “In that time units are performing tasks that are key elements of their wartime missions, whether it’s building roads, operating unmanned aerial vehicles, or moving people and supplies by helicopter.”

Units that support JTF-N missions deploy just as they would in wartime, and for many units it’s their first chance to deploy their equipment and vehicles aboard Air Force airlift aircraft, Carrasco said. “And many of the units that gain experience with us here then go on to use that experience when they deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan.

“What really makes working with us a win-win situation for both law-enforcement agencies and military units is that it doesn’t cost them anything,” he said. “These missions are executed at no cost to the law-enforcement organizations, except for the cost of construction materials on engineer

▲ JTF-N’s military training teams support a range of civilian disaster-preparedness efforts, providing both training materials and oversight.

missions, and JTF-N funds all of the military unit’s mission costs, including airlift, per diem and travel. It’s a great deal for all concerned.”

Securing the Homeland

The most important thing to remember about JTF-N, Riojas said, is that the agency is making a vital contribution to homeland security.

“Terrorists and drug traffickers have unlimited resources, access to high technology, are not bound by laws or international agreements, and are dedicated to destroying our way of life,” he said. “By providing understaffed and underfunded law-enforcement agencies with the help they need, JTF-N is helping ensure the nation’s survival. It’s that simple.” ■

Pot War in the Forest

Story and Photos by Steve Harding



WHILE Joint Task Force-North's law enforcement-support missions have long focused on cross-border drug smuggling and other transnational threats, since 1995 the agency has also been responsible for supporting the battle against illegal drugs produced right here at home.

And though that mission has taken active-duty and Reserve military personnel to both the northern and southern border areas in support of local and state law-enforcement agencies, units supporting JTF-N are increasingly finding themselves working with the U.S. Forest Service in an unexpected area — the nation's public lands.

► An Army UH-1 from the National Training Center (*foreground*) and an Air Force UH-1 sit on a pad at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., awaiting another marijuana reconnaissance flight as part of a JTF-N-supported mission.

A Growing Threat

"Producers of illegal drugs are moving their operations onto public lands for a very basic reason — to avoid law-enforcement agents along the border and to avoid the seizure of their property and finances if they're caught," said Armando Carrasco, JTF-N's public affairs officer. "If you're discovered making methamphetamines

or cultivating marijuana in your home or anywhere on your property, the federal government can seize virtually everything you have. On public lands, property-seizure laws don't apply unless the drug traffickers can be tied directly to the illicit drug production."

While manufacturing illegal drugs on public lands may help drug producers keep their ill-gotten gains, the



practice creates both environmental problems and hazards for employees and visitors, said senior USFS law-enforcement special agent Mark A. Tarantino.

“Common drug-production techniques damage watersheds and critical wildlife habitats, while the presence in the growing area of armed growers, vicious dogs and booby traps creates a very real threat to the safety of people using the land for legitimate purposes,” he said.

Since the vast majority of the nation’s public lands are administered by the USFS, battling the illicit drug trade is now a prime mission for that agency’s law-enforcement division.

The only problem, Tarantino said, is that the agency is being overwhelmed by the task.



“This is not the 1960s, and these growers aren’t harmless mom-and-pop types. This is big business, and it’s tied directly to the major Mexican drug cartels,” he said. “While the cartels have virtually limitless resources, we don’t — the Forest Service has just 700 law-enforcement personnel to cover more than 191 million acres of land. And we don’t have any dedicated drug-enforcement aircraft to use for reconnaissance or to insert eradication teams.”

That’s where JTF-N comes in.

“JTF-N can help provide aircraft, vehicles and personnel to support the law-enforcement operations of the Forest Service and other agencies,” Carrasco said. “And the aircraft we can help provide — primarily UH-60 Black Hawks from active-duty units — can make a huge difference in the agencies’ success.”

▲ The pilots of the NTC UH-1 scan the terrain and the aircraft’s instruments as they carry law-enforcement personnel toward a suspected marijuana garden.

Fields of Green in the Golden State

JTF-N’s support is perhaps most valuable in California, Tarantino said, where the production of methamphetamines is increasing, the national forests produce more pot than in any other growing area in the country and, in a disturbing new development, the drug cartels are now trying to produce opium poppies.

“That’s why we in JTF-N are so happy to help in this state,” said LTC T.J. Jameson, JTF-N’s California mission planner. “There is a very real need for the support we can offer.”

That help comes in two forms, Jameson said.

“We do both on-call and active missions here and in the rest of the

With his aircraft parked at a rendezvous area on a ridgeline above the clouds, the UH-1’s crewchief watches for the approaching Air Force helicopter.



▶ **Armed with automatic weapons, two Monterey County Sheriff's deputies prepare to board the helicopter that will lower them into the suspected pot garden.**

Air Force's 76th Helicopter Flight at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Both California installations are within a few hours' flight time of the recent mission's area of operations, which encompassed several thousand square miles of rugged terrain in the Los Padres, Sierra, Stanislaus, Sequoia, Angeles, Cleveland and San Bernardino national forests.

At the time of **Soldiers'** visit, the aircraft were operating in the Los Padres National Forest from a small airfield at Fort Hunter Liggett, about 40 miles south of Monterey. The aircrews were supporting the USFS and the Monterey County Sheriff's Office with reconnaissance, detection and eradication flights.

On this mission the Air Force UH-1 carried two sheriff's deputies, who were lowered by hoist into marijuana gardens sited on precarious slopes in

▶ **Having lowered the deputies onto a steep, brush-covered hillside, the crew of the Air Force UH-1 prepares to lower cutting tools to the waiting officers.**

the mountains near Big Sur. The Army UH-1 orbited to provide assistance if required, while law-enforcement agents aboard the Black Hawks searched for other pot gardens.

The aircrews were confronted by challenging flying conditions — steep mountains cut by deep, heavily forested ravines, with contrary winds blowing first one way, then another. In the late afternoon, coastal fog also became a problem, creeping inland from the sea and gradually moving up the ravines.

For the civilian observers aboard the Army Black Hawks the challenge



country," he said. "For on-call missions we find units that are local to the target area and call on them as needed — which might only be an hour ahead. For active missions we bring an entire unit in from out of state and keep it on station for a fixed period."

Mission in the Mountains

A recent on-call mission in Central California well illustrates the type of support JTF-N can provide. Taking part in the operation were Army UH-1 and UH-60 helicopters of the National Training Center Aviation Company from Fort Irwin, and UH-1s of the



was picking out the brilliant green of the marijuana patches from among the dozen other hues of green that splashed each mountainside. Growers often site their gardens in the most rugged, densely forested areas they can find, and spotting the gardens can be the aerial equivalent of trying to find a needle in a haystack.

But the veteran observers are highly skilled, and over the course of the day's flying spotted several pot gardens. The sheriff's deputies went in to pull out the plants, and by the time the mission ended in late afternoon the law-enforcement agents were able to declare a small victory in the war on drugs. They also talked about the importance of the military assistance provided through JTF-N.

"The Los Padres forest is a pretty popular area for marijuana growers," said Raymond Gould, the USFS law-enforcement patrol captain for the forest. "We have to work in very rugged and inaccessible terrain, and the military helicopters have hoists and other equipment that really help us get into the places we need to go. Having these aircraft available is a tremendous help, and without them I don't think

we could do the job."

And the job done with military support is a big one. In 2003 military support enabled law-enforcement agencies to locate and eradicate almost \$1.4 billion worth of marijuana in California alone, Jameson said.

A Win-Win Situation

As important as JTF-N's help is to law-enforcement agencies, counter-drug support missions are also beneficial to the military units themselves, Jameson said.

"A lot of the tasks the military units undertake on these missions fall



The Forest Service has just 700 law-enforcement personnel to cover more than 191 million acres of land.

▲ The deputies huddle with the pilot of the lead helicopter to discuss tactics for a second insertion. The day's activities ultimately netted a considerable number of marijuana plants.

squarely within their mission-essential task lists," he said. "And at installations such as Fort Hunter Liggett the units are also able to undertake training — such as gunnery and mountain flying — that they're not able to do at their home stations."

"The JTF-N mission is wonderful from a unit's point of view, because it gives us the opportunity to undertake some excellent training while also carrying out an important real-world mission," said MAJ Mark A. Sisco, commander of the NTC Avn. Co.

"Participating in a JTF-N-supported mission really is a win-win situation for military units," Jameson said. "Our message to units that want to support these missions is this: We'll get you to some prime training areas, pay your expenses and help you do some very important work. What have you got to lose?" ■



CALLING
all platoon sergeants, squad leaders,
section chiefs and supervisors!

DO YOU KNOW A

Soldiers' Soldier?

Soldiers magazine is looking for a Soldier to be featured in the December 2005 issue, and we need your help. Do you know a Soldier in the rank of specialist or below who lives by the Army Values and is proud of what he or she does for the Army? If so, let us know.



This Soldier should be someone that you, as a leader, have gotten to know both professionally and personally.



To nominate a Soldier, tell us about the person and why we should feature him or her in the magazine.

Send an e-mail to ***[lisa.m.gregor @us.army.mil](mailto:lisa.m.gregor@us.army.mil)***

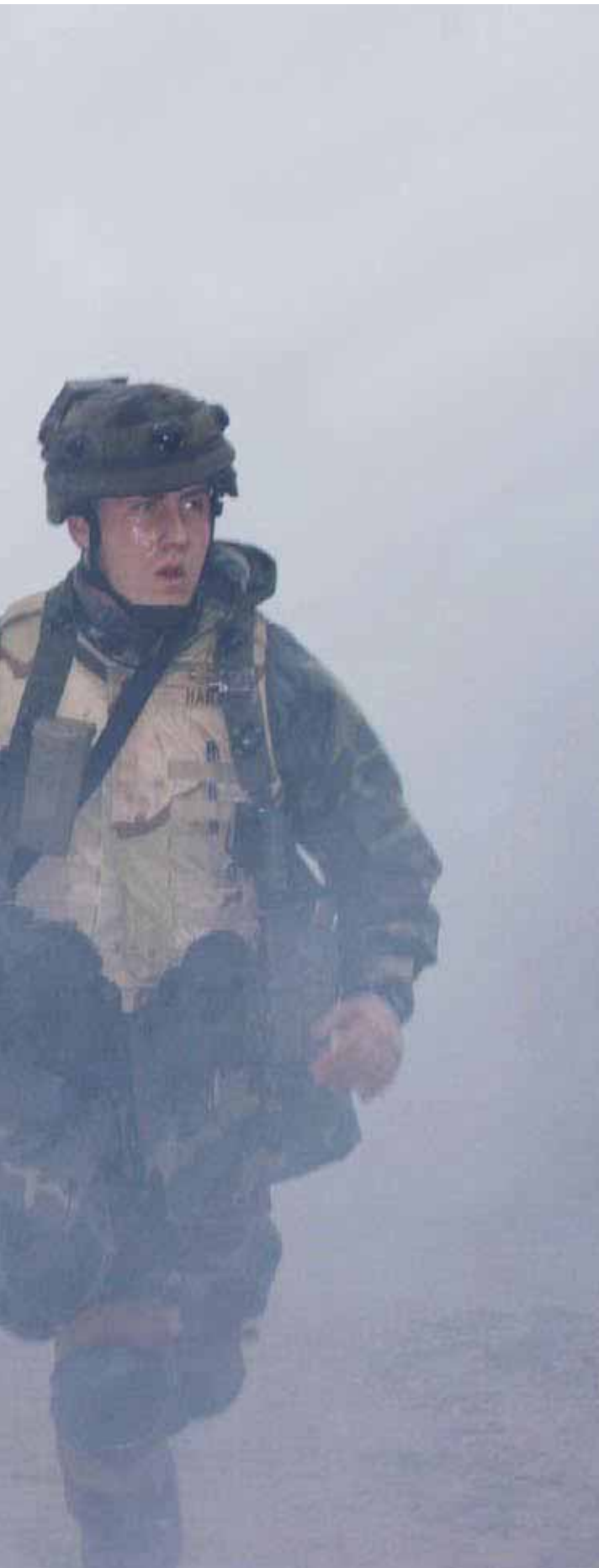
or send a letter to

NCOIC, Soldiers Magazine
9325 Gunston Road, S108
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

Soldiers

Under cover of dense smoke, medics of the 111th Engineer Battalion evacuate an "injured patient" to a waiting ambulance.





Treating a patient who has suffered a traumatic wound in a sterile environment can be very stressful. But trying to provide medical care for an injured person in ice-cold rain, covered in mud and while being shot at can be more than overwhelming. For medics of the 56th Brigade Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division, this was business as usual as they conducted advanced trauma training in December at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La. As they trained, they knew that in less than a month they would be treating real wounds on the battlefields in Iraq. 🇺🇸



▲ SSG Jason Clay asks a role-playing “angry resident” to move away from an ambulance where “patients” are being treated.

Mail 2photo submissions for Shar2 Shooters to: **Sharp Shooters, Soldiers, 9325 Gunston Road, Ste. S108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581**. Digital images should be directed to: lisa.gregory@belvoir.army.mil. All submissions must include an introductory 2aragra2h and ca2tions.



▲ CPL Gilbert Juarez patrols the area near a point where medics are treating “injured residents” of a mock village.



▲ A vehicle “explodes” as Soldiers defend their position against “enemy attack” during the exercise.



► Medics use their negotiating skills to calm “residents” during the exercise.



▲ SGT Adrian Castaneda provides security for medics arriving at an “accident scene.”

The New Servicemembers Civil Relief Act

IN December 2003 President George W. Bush signed into law the "Servicemembers Civil Relief Act" (SCRA), a complete revision of the 1940 Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act (SSCRA). Shortly afterwards, Bush signed the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004, which amended the SCRA by adding further rights.

The older SSCRA had been changed through numerous amendments and had undergone many judicial interpretations, causing difficulties in understanding and applying the law. The 2003 legislation both changed the law's name so that it clearly encompasses all of the armed services, and settled many ambiguous provisions while incorporating recent court decisions.

The SCRA legislation covers the many issues confronting service members and their families, and now clearly includes National Guard and Reserve personnel. The 2003 SCRA and its 2004 amendments comprise a large body of law that would require many pages to repeat and explain its changes. Therefore, this article can only skim the surface of the law in all its applications.

National Guard Inclusions

The SCRA continues the December 2002 protections of the SSCRA for National Guard members

called to active duty for 30 days or more when carrying out a contingency mission specified by the president or the secretary of defense.



Contract Protection

Any waiver of benefits of the SCRA must be in a separate written document and in at least 12-point type. (For example, a waiver of SCRA benefit may not be written into the "fine print" of a lease contract. It must be clearly explained in a separate document.)

Interest Rate Caps

The law clarifies the rules on the 6-percent interest rate cap on pre-service loans and obligations by specifying that interest in excess of 6 percent per year must be forgiven. This eliminates the arguments that the excess interest amounts were only to be deferred and paid at a future date. Service members must nevertheless make written requests and include copies of their orders to achieve the reduction in interest rates. And this relief does not apply to interest on debts incurred while on active duty.

Court Proceedings

The SCRA extends a service member's right to stay

Steven Chucala is chief of client services in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at Fort Belvoir, Va.

court proceedings, either as the plaintiff or defendant, in civil cases, including administrative hearings that were not included in the old SSCRA. This expansion will treat the increasing number of issues being adjudicated by administrative rather than judicial forums that a service member could not previously delay.

The law also requires a court or administrative hearing to grant at least a 90-day stay if requested by the service member due to his or her inability to attend the proceeding because of military duties. Additional stays can be granted at the discretion of the judge or

hearing official.

It also overcomes the abuse by some courts that took a service member's request for stay of proceedings and declared that the request constituted an

appearance in the suit, denied the request and then went ahead with the court action.

In those cases where a stay is denied, counsel must be appointed to represent the service member in his or her absence. And, in those cases, even the attorney may request a 90-day stay if there is a defense that cannot be presented in the absence of the member or the attorney has been unable to contact the member to determine whether a defense exists.

The law also prohibits a court from making a default judgment without determining if the defendant is in the military service and appointing counsel to defend the service member's rights if appropriate.

Eviction Protection

The new SCRA modifies the eviction-protection section by precluding evictions from premises occupied by service members when the rents due are below a certain level. For 2004, that amount was \$2,465, an increase from the previous \$1,200. The Act provides a formula to calculate the rent ceiling for subsequent years.

Taxation

Under the new law, states are now prohibited from increasing the tax bracket of a nonmilitary spouse who had earned income from adding the service member's military income. The prohibition applies when the inclusion of the service member's income was required by the state for the limited purpose of determining

the nonmilitary spouse's tax bracket but had the added effect of increasing the family's tax burden.

Leases

The 2003 law extended the active duty service member's right to terminate real property leases when he or she is complying with permanent-change-of-station orders or deployment orders of 90 days or more. The 2004 amendment extends the termination right to spouses or dependants who jointly lease with the soldier and defines "orders" as including official orders or any notification, certification or verification from the commander concerning the service member's current or future duties.

The 2003 law also includes the termination of automobile leases entered into prior to active duty or while the service member is on active duty, if the member receives PCS orders to a location outside the continental United States or deployment orders for a period of 180 days or more (Alaska and Hawaii are included as OCONUS). The member must provide a written termination request, a copy of his or her orders, and must return the vehicle within 15 days of delivery of the written termination notice.

Insurance Premiums

Service members may request deferments of certain commercial life-insurance premiums for the period of military service and two years thereafter. If the Department of Veterans Affairs approves the request, the United States will guarantee the payments, the policy shall continue in effect and the service member will have two years after the period of military service to repay all premiums and interest.

Other Actions

The SCRA retains the SSCRA section that automatically extends the effectiveness of a service member's power of attorney while the member is listed as missing.

It also guarantees residency and the service member's right to vote in federal, state or local elections, if absent from the jurisdiction due to military orders.

These changes and many others will require a long period of education for civilian courts, administrative boards, agencies, private businesses, attorneys and military members. Your legal-assistance office is your best source for determining your rights with regard to the new SCRA.





Conserve Energy and Save Money

Energy

HOW MUCH DO YOU USE?

RESIDENTS of some new and remodeled private housing units have entered, or will soon enter, a mock utility-billing program. The program is intended to help residents track their usage and consumption, and learn to be more energy efficient.

In the spring of 2006, Army families in private housing will become responsible for their own utility bills. The cost of utilities will be supported by Soldier basic allowance for housing or BAH/rental payments.

Good conservation will mean that most families won't be required to send in payments, said Ivan Bolden, Residential Communities Initiative's program manager for policy.

Only residents who use more than the average for their area and type of housing will need to pay the difference, he said. Families that use less than the allocated rate may earn rebates.

To start conserving energy, follow these cold-weather tips from the Department of Energy:

- ≡ Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter.
- ≡ Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month, or as needed.
- ≡ Clean warm-air registers, baseboard heaters and radiators as needed. Make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapes.
- ≡ Use kitchen, bath and other ventilation fans wisely, turning them off once they've done the job. These fans can empty a house of warm air in just an hour.
- ≡ During the heating season, keep draperies and shades on south-facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter the home and closed at night to reduce the chill from cold windows.
- ≡ Close unoccupied rooms that are isolated from the rest of the house, such as in a corner, and turn down the thermostat or turn off the heating for those rooms.

— Army News Service and Department of Energy

Books

"IT'S OKAY TO CRY"

THE story of a Pentagon employee who helped others to safety on 9/11 has come to life in the form of a children's book.

"It's Okay to Cry" is about compassion, courage and hope. It's the story of John Yates, written by Meg Bragg.

Yates was working as a security manager at the Pentagon when a plane crashed into the building Sept. 11, 2001. Though burned over more than 35 percent of his body, he helped lead others to safety.

"I wanted the book to be a positive thing — not sugar coated, but not so devastating that children don't sleep at night," said Bragg. "The book is a nice parallel between John's recovery and the nation's recovery."

— SFC Tammy M. Jarrett



The book is available at
www.megbragg.com/its-okay-to-cry.htm.

ARMED FORCES RELIEF TRUST

If you're a Soldier or Army family member and feeling the strain of a tight budget, read on.

With the support of the National Association of Broadcasters, the four Military Aid Societies — Air Force Aid Society, Army Emergency Relief, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance and Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society — have created the Armed Forces Relief Trust.

AFRT's mission is to provide a single vehicle for accepting donations that will benefit members of the armed forces and their families. Examples of assistance include payment for a Soldier's airfare to fly home for a parent's funeral, a special reading program for a Soldier's daughter, special medical attention for a Soldier's expectant spouse or college tuition for a Soldier's child.

Contributions can be made online using a credit card or by mailing a check to Armed Forces Relief Trust, Department 6055, Washington, D.C., 20004-6055. Donations are divided among the four military-relief organizations unless contributors specify otherwise.



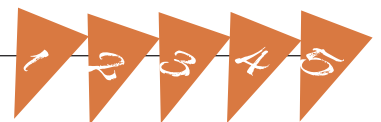
For information on the Armed Forces Relief Trust, go to www.aftrust.org



TAX TIPS FOR SOLDIERS

TAX laws provide some special benefits to active members of the U.S. armed forces, including those serving in combat zones. For tax-filing tips, fact sheets and information on the Military Family Tax Relief Act, go to www.irs.gov. Click on "The Newsroom" and "Armed Forces" under "Related Topics."

ARMY FAMILY ACTION PLAN



THE Army Family Action Plan lets Soldiers and families tell Army leaders what's working and what isn't — and what they think will fix it.

The top five issues brought forward in the 2004 AFAP Conference were:

1. Eyeglass coverage for family members
2. Expiration of Tricare referral authorizations
3. Childcare fee category
4. Calculation of continental United States family subsistence supplemental allowance and
5. Leave accrual.

The issues originated at installations throughout the world and addressed force support mobility and deployment support employment entitlements and medical and dental issues — all elements that support a better quality of life for Soldiers and their families.

Issues are continually being monitored and worked toward resolution at local levels, major Army commands and at the Department of the Army level. To get involved in your local AFAP, review current issues or read AFAP success stories, go to www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_afap/home.asp.

— Army Community Service

Empowering Woman

THE Women at Work Museum “Power and Influence” exhibit, in Attleboro, Mass., features women of power and influence from all walks of life, including the military. At the exhibit’s opening, Army Reserve **COL Jill Morgenthau** told of her recent deployment to Iraq as the multinational forces’ public affairs officer.

“I was responsible for informing the public about the military role in bringing freedom and democracy to the people of Iraq,” she said. Morgenthau worked with well-known broadcasters Geraldo Rivera, Dan Rather, Christiane Amanpour, Tom Brokaw and Peter Jennings.

“One of the exciting things I started to do in Iraq, and I’m continuing to do today, is work with the Iraqi army and NATO to help women in the Iraqi military,” she said. “I think women, who make up 50




“Today, military women are bodyguards for generals; they patrol dangerous streets in Afghanistan and Iraq; and they fight and die for America.”

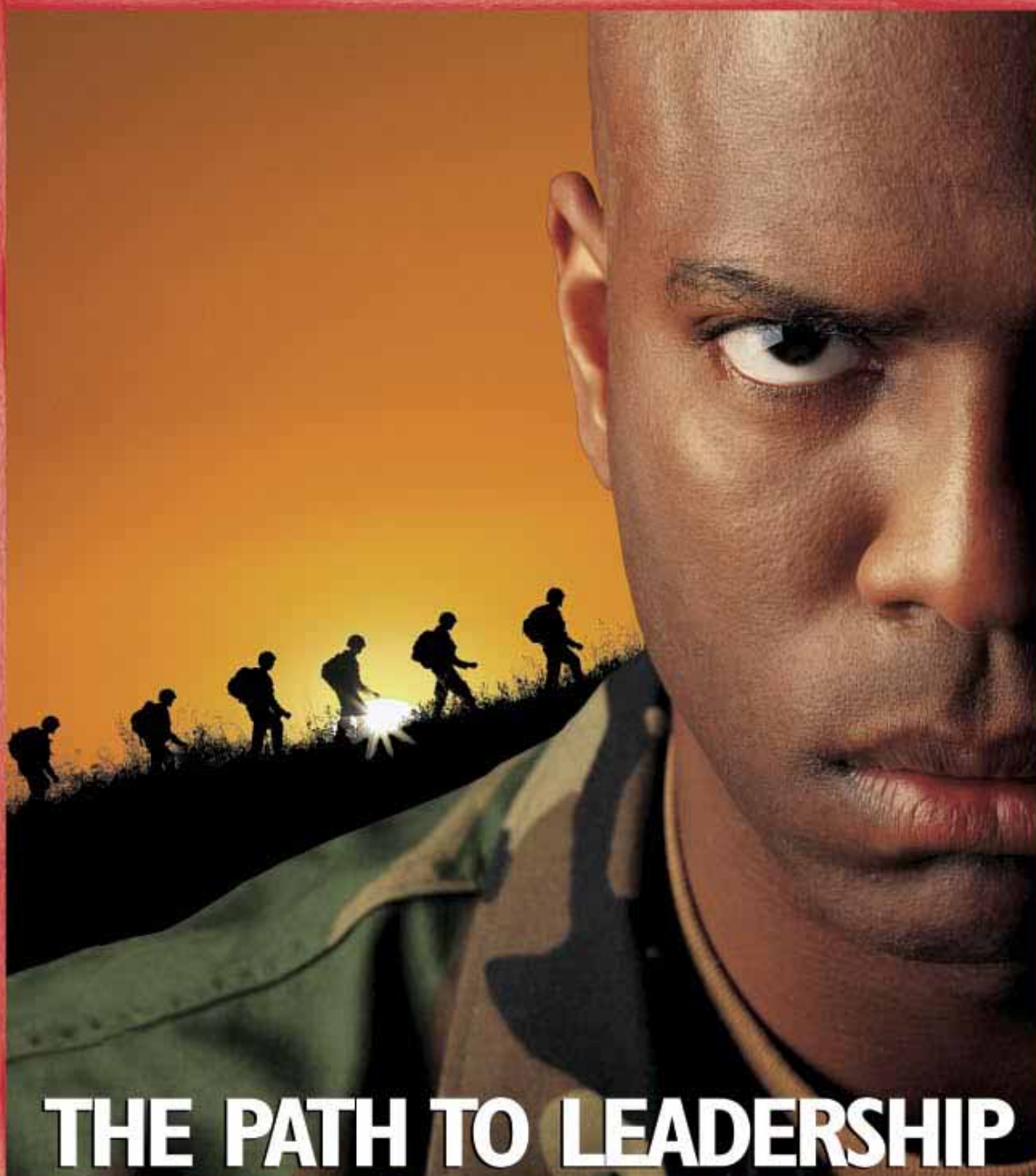
percent of Iraqi society, are the strength of this fledgling nation. The Iraqi army includes Sunni, Shiite, Kurdish and Christian women, ages 22 to 40. They are professional women, single mothers, artists and teachers. I am so impressed with their sincerity and dedication to making Iraq a secure and free republic that I’m striving to get these women the training they need to be both military police officers and leaders.”

Morgenthau was one of the first female officers to serve as part of America’s gender-integrated military. Over the course of her career, she’s watched women prove themselves in war and peace.

“Today, military women are bodyguards for generals; they patrol dangerous streets in Afghanistan and Iraq; they provide shelter and aid to the wounded; and they fight and die for America,” she said. “I have commanded Soldiers from Minnesota to Ohio. I have led Soldiers in Korea, Germany, Bosnia, Egypt and Iraq. The military gave me an opportunity to be a leader years before the rest of American society accepted women in power.

“I hope in 20 years my children will proudly tell their children that grandma helped bring democracy to the Middle East,” she said. 

COL Geoff Jones is the director of public affairs for the U.S. Army Reserve.



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IN THIS SITUATION, THERE ISN'T TIME FOR A TRANSLATOR.



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